

Application No. 10/813,974
Amendment Dated March 9, 2009
Reply to Office Action Dated December 8, 2008

Remarks

Claims 1-42 are pending.

Claims 1-42 stand rejected

Claims 1, 21, 39 and 42 have been amended.

Claims 1-42 are submitted herein for review.

No new matter has been added.

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 for indefiniteness. Applicants have amended claim 39 accordingly and respectfully request that this rejection of claim 39 be withdrawn.

Turning to the prior art, the Examiner has rejected independent claims 1, 21 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the previously cited Schaffer (U.S. Patent No. 6,385,312) in view of Elsey et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0055351).

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner and submit the following remarks in response.

The present invention as claimed in the independent claims is directed to a method for routing a call from a wireless communications device to a directory

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assistance call center including receiving a call, having an associated communication device identifier, at a first assistance call center. The call is routed to this first assistance call center based on said communications device identifier which is designated to handle all calls having the communications device identifier, regardless of the location of the wireless communication device.

Then, the geographic vicinity of the wireless communications device is determined at the first directory assistance call center. The call is then re-routed to a second directory assistance call center if that second directory assistance call center is closer to the geographic vicinity of the wireless communications device than the first directory assistance call center.

As detailed in paragraph [0023] of the present application, such an arrangement is useful for example in a directory assistance context, when calls are routed to call centers based on the ANI (Automatic Number Identifier) of the wireless device. For example, when a caller is traveling with a wireless device and they call directory assistance, their ANI will cause the call to be routed to the call center closest to their home ANI and not to the call center closest to where they are physically located. With some advanced directory assistance features, such as concierge features, a local call center may be better suited to handle a call than the home call center of the caller that the call was initially routed to based on the caller's ANI. In such an instance, the arrangement of the present invention, after having the call routed to the first call center based on the ANI, then determines the location of the caller and re-routes the call to the

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second geographically proximate call center.

In the present rejection, the Examiner cites primarily to Schafer which is a 1-800 routing system. Typically, when dialing a number such as 1-800 FLOWERS the user is desiring to purchase flowers locally using the nationally advertised toll free number. The call is sent to a first terminating switch (or call center) to determine where the call is originating so that the call is sent out to the appropriate destination which must be geographically proximate to the caller. See column 38, line 50 - column 39, line 5. The geographic location of the caller is determined using their ANI, call routing information and Lat/lon triangulation (for cell callers).

The purpose of Schafer is thus to quickly and accurately direct a call to a geographically proximate desired number for call completion.

To form the rejection, the Examiner indicates that the call is routed to the first call center based on the ANI of the caller. However, this is incorrect. Rather, columns 38-39 and Figures 27-30 of Schafer as well as the entire disclosure as a whole clearly indicate that the *routing to the first (and only switch/call center) is based on the dialed number itself, namely the 1-800 number*. See specifically, column 38, lines 40-45.

In Schafer the locations of the call center (800 switch) itself is not important, only the location of the destination listings, such as 150a and 150b, both of which are presumably geographically proximate to the caller.

Later in the rejection, the Examiner also argues that the call in Schafer may be routed to a second call center based on the location of the caller. However, as noted

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above there is no second call center in Shafer only a first call center/switch and then destination numbers. See for example, see column 40, lines 36-46. The only routing in Schafer using the geographic location data is from the call center to the destination number/“servicing location.”

In forming the remainder of the rejection, the Examiner cites to Elsey to show the routing of a call to a first call center based on ANI (regardless of location) and the re-routing to a second call center based more geographically proximate to the location of the caller. Applicants respectfully disagree that Elsey teaches this element.

The Elsey reference relates to an enhanced Personal Information Management (PIM) service employed at/on a directory assistance system. For example, typical DA requests require city and state and the full name of the desired listing in order to search and retrieve the desired listings, but such information is not always handy to the caller. Elsey syncs a PIM account with typical directory assistance systems so that traveling users may call the directory assistance system and find desired listings with partial or incomplete information. See for example paragraphs [0004] and [0008] of Elsey.

In Elsey Figure 1 does in fact show a directory assistance system, with many geographically separate call centers. However, there is no routing of calls from one center to another based on the location of the caller.

The Examiner cited to paragraphs [0090] and [0091] of Elsey to illustrate this point. However, in both paragraphs only one call center is employed. These paragraphs instead relate to alternative PIM connectivity embodiments. In paragraph [0090] a user

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uses a desktop PIM application to call another party. The location of *the called party* is determined (by the number itself) and the call passes through *one* of the call centers that is located closest to that called party. In paragraph [0091] a mobile user contacts the system, their location is determined, and the call is sent to *one call center* closest to them before completion to the desired party. Neither paragraph in Elsey discusses transferring a call between two different directory assistance call centers.

As such, even if the references were combined as suggested by the Examiner, the resulting system and method would still not teach or suggest all of the elements of the independent claims. For example, there is no teaching or suggestion in either Shaffer or Elsey, that discloses receiving a call at a first directory assistance call center based on the communications device identifier, where the first directory assistance call center is designated to handle all calls having that communications device identifier regardless of the location of the wireless communication device.

Likewise, there is no teaching or suggestion in either Shaffer or Elsey that discloses determining the geographic vicinity of the wireless communications device at the first directory assistance call center, and re-routing the call to a second directory assistance call center if that second directory assistance call center is closer to the geographic vicinity of the wireless communications device than the first directory assistance call center.

In view of the foregoing Applicants respectfully submit that pending claims 1-42 are in condition for allowance, the earliest possible notice of which is earnestly solicited.

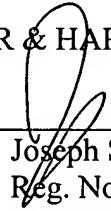
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If the Examiner feels that an interview would facilitate the prosecution of this Application they are invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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